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Navy & Marine Corps Medical News (MEDNEWS)  
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This service distributes news and information to  
Sailors and Marines, their families, civilian employees,  
and retired Navy and Marine Corps families. Further  
dissemination of this e-mail is encouraged.

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MN97166. Technology Links Mids to Docs Long Distance

Annapolis, MD - The image on the computer screen grew  
bigger, then turned into a tunnel lined with hairs and wax.

LT Patricia Pettit, MC, eases a tiny camera deeper into  
her patient's ear canal and adjusts the controls. She  
touches a button, and - voila! - she's in consultation with  
an ear specialist who is 75 miles away at National Naval  
Medical Center Bethesda, MD.

Pettit, a general practice doctor at the Naval  
Academy's branch medical clinic, has just sent a recording  
of her patient's inner ear via telemedicine, a technology  
that uses computers, video cameras, microphones, and high-  
speed computer lines to send medical examinations from  
patient to specialist - even if that specialist is half a  
world away.

"It allows us to move information, not people," said  
CAPT R. Tom Sizemore III, MC, who runs the branch clinic.

The academy is one of several sites to try out  
telemedicine, and it's already saved several dozen visits to  
Bethesda. Instead of the trip, which can take mids out of  
class for the better part of a day, general practice doctors  
peered down the ears, noses and throats of the ailing mids

with recording devices and sent the images to Bethesda specialists. The specialists were able to pull up the images and look at them at a time of their convenience.

"The quality (of care) isn't decreased at all, plus you have these tremendous time savings," said Sizemore.

Soon, the clinic will be able to send echocardiograms, EKGs, even ophthalmological tests through the computer link up.

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MN97167. Operation Stop Cough: Washing Up to Keep Colds Down  
Great Lakes, IL - The results are in: Recruits who wash up more have fewer colds.

That's the finding of health care providers at Great Lakes who started "Operation Stop Cough," a program to get recruits to wash their hands to stop the spread of illnesses.

During boot camp many recruits report to Naval Hospital (NH) Great Lakes Recruit Clinic for upper respiratory illness (URI), a condition generally known as the common cold. With recruits sharing many of the common living areas they are very susceptible to one of the many forms of URI.

"Most recruits will have some form of upper respiratory illness during their eight weeks of boot camp. It may be a runny nose, sore throat or cough," said LCDR Margaret A. K. Ryan, MC, a preventive medicine physician at Great Lakes.

According to Ryan, since the introduction of Operation Stop Cough, the number of patients with URIs has gone down by more than half. Last winter, the medical department would see as many as 500 patients per week. This past winter, the recruit clinic saw only 200 to 250 patients each week for URI.

The remarkable reduction in URI cases is not because of any miracle drug but an old fashioned solution - hand washing. Because most germs are spread by our hands through normal contact everyday, recruit division commanders and recruits are encouraged to wash their hands at least five times a day to reduce the threat of infection and illness.

Before this initiative, recruits were never instructed not to wash their hands, but a dry sink in recruit barracks was an "inspection ready" sink. Today, a wet sink can pass inspection as long as it's clean.

Hand washing is just the first step in the war against the common cold. In the future Operation Stop Cough may include initiatives to improve ventilation and air quality, as well as changes in training regimes and nutrition that might help stop colds.

"The less patients we see for upper respiratory illness, the more time they (recruits) are able to spend training for their future careers. This will allow the medical clinic to focus on more primary prevention issues," said Ryan.

By Kimberly Allen, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

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MN97168. Surgeon General Salutes Navy Nurses on Anniversary  
Washington, DC - Navy Surgeon General VADM Harold Koenig, MC, saluted members of the Nurse Corps recently in a message released to recognize the 89th birthday of the Nurse Corps.

"On behalf of all of the men and women of the Navy Medical Department, I extend sincere congratulations to members of the Navy Nurse Corps: active, reserve, past and present, on the occasion of your 89th anniversary.

"Starting in 1908 with only 20 Nurses, the Navy Nurse Corps has proven to be indispensable in the delivery of health care. Today over 5,000 active duty and reserve nurses serve at fleet hospital facilities, aboard ship, aircraft carriers, amphibious and hospital ships, and in medical facilities throughout the United States and overseas.

"I am proud of the many accomplishments and contributions each of you continue to make on a daily basis. Navy Nurses are key to re-engineering how Navy Medicine does business. You have made it possible to take health care to the deckplates and keep our Sailors and Marines on the job.

"As you celebrate this 89th anniversary you can reflect with pride upon your significant and lasting contributions which directly support Navy Medicine and the Navy's mission. Each of you is a valuable team player in meeting the challenges of the future. I wish you a very happy 89th birthday."

The Nurse Corps was officially established May 13, 1908.

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MN97169. DTs Shine in Shore Sailor of the Year Competition  
Washington, DC - Here's an interesting statistic.

Forty percent of all finalists for this year's Navy-wide Shore Sailor of the Year competition are dental technicians.

DT1 (SW/AW) Anthony Cal of Naval Dental Center San Diego is the Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet's Shore Sailor of the Year nomination. DT1 (SW) Hazelann Teamer of Naval Dental Center Bethesda, MD, is the Vice Chief of Naval Operations' nomination.

"In my memory, this is the first time a dental technician has made it this far in the Shore Sailor of the Year competition," said DTCM John P. Colbert, dental technicians plans officer for the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery's Master Chief. "To have two make it this far is really icing on the cake for all of Navy Medicine."

The two will join three other nominees in Washington, DC, the end of May for the final round of competition. The winner will be the Chief of Naval Operation's Shore Sailor of the Year for 1997.

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MN97170. Navy Doc Steps Out in Style from Mir

Orbiting the Earth - Navy CAPT Jerry Linenger, MC, aboard Russian space station Mir, took his first spacewalk recently, dressed in a suit loaned to him by his Russian comrades. This is the first time an American has walked in space wearing a Russian spacesuit.

The Americans are expected to reciprocate in September when Russian cosmonaut Vladimir Titov is scheduled to conduct a spacewalk wearing a U.S. spacesuit.

On this spacewalk, Linenger and Russian cosmonaut Vasily Tsibliev, placed two experiments and a radiation detection device on Mir's modules. The experiments will collect data on the effect of the space environment on the station's outer surface. They also retrieved two experiments deployed outside Mir last year that monitored the outside environment and evaluated a safety tether that spacewalkers may use on the planned international space station.

Linenger has been on board Mir since January. On May 8, he hits a unique milestone: He'll have the second most time in space of any American. Only astronaut Shannon Lucid will have more.

Linenger is expected to return to Earth in May.

By Vera Ando-Winstead, BUMED

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MN97171. Bremerton Doc Wins Top Research Awards

Bremerton, WA - LCDR John R. Holman, MC, a family practice physician at Naval Hospital (NH) Bremerton, received two top place awards for medical research from the Uniformed Services Academy of Family Physicians (USAFP).

Holman received the honors during the USAFP's annual scientific assembly. More than 300 family physicians from all branches of the uniformed services attended the conference.

Holman's paper, "Consultation Rates for Navy Independent Duty Corpsmen in an Acute Care Clinic," won first place. It examined the effects of a required family physician review of all consultations written by an independent duty corpsman. His research showed a 64 percent decrease in specialist consultations when a family physician reviewed the consultations.

"The research shows family physicians, with their broad range of skills and knowledge, can assist independent duty corpsman in providing timely, high quality medical care to our active duty members," Holman said.

Another of Holman's research papers, "Low-Grade Lymphoma Manifesting as Acute Epididymitis," was awarded second place in the staff case presentations category.

By Judith A. Robertson, NH Bremerton

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MN97172. Pensacola Corpsman Named Top Senior Pharmacy Tech

Pensacola, FL - HM1 Darryl Eubanks of Naval Hospital

(NH) Pensacola was named as the Navy's first-ever winner of the Senior Pharmacy Technician of the Year award recently during ceremonies at the Combined Forces Pharmacy Seminar in Dallas.

Eubanks, leading petty officer in the pharmacy at NH Pensacola, was presented a trophy by CAPT David Woker, MSC, Navy Medicine's pharmacy specialty leader. Eubanks was cited by Navy Surgeon General VADM Harold Koenig, MC, for his "unequivocal commitment to total quality health care" and for "revitalization of the pharmacy's patient satisfaction program and increased communication with all customers."

By Rod Duren, NH Pensacola

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#### MN97173. Health Affairs Looking For Excellent Docs

Washington, DC - The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs is soliciting nominations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff award for excellence in military medicine.

The award was established in 1993 through the Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher Armed Forces Foundation. It recognizes military physicians who represent the very best in scholarship, research, practice, leadership, and potential. Each recipient receives a \$50,000 research grant and a plaque from the foundation.

Navy nominees must be in grades Lieutenant through Commander.

Deadline for nomination packages is May 30, 1997.

For more information, contact LCDR D. K. Smith, MSC, Bureau of Medicine Surgery, at e-mail nmc9dks@bms220.med.navy.mil or telephone (202) 762-3059.

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#### MN97174. Tropical Medicine Course Offered

Bethesda, MD - The Naval School of Health Science and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS) are sponsoring a tropical medicine course July 7-Aug. 15.

For infectious disease fellows, there is also the option of visiting one of the Navy or Army laboratories in a tropical location for two to four weeks.

The course will include lecture, laboratory and practical field experience.

Enrollment is limited to 30 Navy physicians. Civilians may apply and participate if military quotas are not filled. Deadline for registration is May 15.

For more information, call CDR Joe P. Bryan, MC, at USUHS, telephone (301) 295-3804 or e-mail bryan@usuhsb.usuhs.mil.

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#### MN97175. "Refresh" BUMED's Homepage for Consistent Viewing

Washington, DC - You're on the phone, talking to a corpsman at another command about an article that's on the

Bureau of Medicine and Surgery's (BUMED) homepage. You describe it to him to help him find it, and even with a graphic description, he can't locate it.

What's wrong? Can it be he's gone to the "wrong" BUMED homepage?

"There's only one BUMED homepage," said Dr. Julius Njoku, BUMED's Webmaster, responsible for the homepage's design and upkeep. "But it can have many different looks, depending on the software you use to view it."

According to Njoku, the BUMED homepage viewed with Netscape may look entirely different than when it's viewed with Air Mosaic or AOL's software. Sometimes, that makes people think they're viewing different homepages.

Another obstacle to consistent viewing is that some people "bookmark" their software to take them into a different section of the homepage rather than to the first page.

According to Njoku, if you've checked both these items and still can't find the reason for inconsistent viewing, try "refreshing" your computer.

"Sometimes, your computer's cache is full. That can cause problems," said Njoku. "By refreshing your computer, you empty the cache. That can help."

However you surf the 'Net, or wherever you go once you get on, there's one thing you can be sure of: There's only one place to go in cyberspace to find the BUMED Homepage. That's [www.support1.med.navy.mil/bumed/](http://www.support1.med.navy.mil/bumed/).

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#### MN97176. TRICARE Question and Answer

Q. I'm trying to make up my mind about which TRICARE option is best for me - Prime, Standard or Extra. Someone told me the best place to find out information about TRICARE and my health care benefit as a member of a military family is a TRICARE Service Center (TSC). How can I find out the location of my nearest TRICARE Service Center?

A. Military hospitals and clinics can help you find the TRICARE centers nearest where you live.

Another alternative that might save you a long distance or toll telephone call if you don't live near a military treatment facility is to check your local telephone directory. In areas where TRICARE is well-established, it may be the best source to find a listing of TSCs near where you live. Directory assistance can also help you find the telephone number of a TSC in your area.

Additional information on TRICARE and your military health care benefit is available on the Department of Defense Health Affairs Homepage on the World Wide Web at [www.ha.osd.mil](http://www.ha.osd.mil).

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#### MN97177. Healthwatch: High Blood Pressure: A Silent Killer

You could have this life-threatening illness, and never know it until it's too late.

Hypertension - high blood pressure - is insidious, a silent killer, a disease without symptoms. It can strike the old, the young, the physically strong, the weak, men, women, or members of any race.

Because there is no appearance of infirmity with hypertension, many people do not take it seriously.

High blood pressure is defined by most health care professionals as consistent readings of 140/90 or higher. This high pressure causes a constant strain on the heart, weakens arteries, and loosens fatty plaque deposits along the arterial walls. This could result in a dislodged piece of debris blocking arteries to possibly cause a heart attack or heart failure. Stroke and/or kidney failure can also result from untreated and undiagnosed high blood pressure.

Most health care professionals recommend you monitor your blood pressure by having it checked at least twice a year.

One of the best ways to control high blood pressure is regular physical exercise. Active people tend to have lower blood pressure because exercise strengthens the cardiovascular system. Aerobic exercises, such as walking, bicycling, playing volleyball, swimming, jogging, dancing, or hiking, have long been linked with lowering high blood pressure.

A moderate weight training program has also been shown to be helpful for hypertensive people. The best weight training program is to lift light-to-moderate weights using a number of different machines and moving quickly from one to the other.

While the complete picture of what causes high blood pressure in some people and not in others isn't known, there are some lifestyle changes that can lower your pressure. These include:

- If you smoke, stop
- Avoid foods high in saturated fats and cholesterol
- Cut down on sodium (salt) in your diet
- Restrict alcohol consumption
- Use relaxation techniques to manage life's inevitable stresses
- Get regular exercise
- Take medications as prescribed

By Kimberly Allen, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery  
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Note: May is National Blood Pressure Awareness Month, dedicated to the prevention and treatment of high blood pressure.

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Feedback and comments are welcome. Story submissions are encouraged. Contact Jan Davis, MEDNEWS editor, at e-mail mednews@bms200.med.navy.mil, telephone 202/762-3223 (DSN 762-3223), or fax 202/762-3224.